An Orthodox Catechism

Being the Sum of Christian Religion, Contained in the Law and Gospel

1680

Written by
Hercules Collins

An Orthodox Catechism - Being the Sum of Christian Religion, Contained in the Law and Gospel
Written by
Hercules Collins

Copyright © 2014
Reformed Baptist Faith & Family Ministry
Typesetting and cover design.

Printed in the United States of America.
Reformed Baptist Faith & Family Ministry
7346 S. Grant City Rd.
Knightstown, Indiana 46148
317-542-3159
www.rbfaithandfamily.org

Dedication

The reprinting of this Catechism is dedicated to all the Christian parents who earnestly desire to fulfill one of the noblest duties given to their life – raising their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. May the Lord bless your labors, according to the riches of His mercy and grace.

Foreword

I wish to express my gratitude toward a dear Christian brother and friend; pastor Steve Weaver. It was he who first introduced me to this wonderful catechism by Hercules Collins, a seventeenth century Particular Baptist pastor who also was a signer of the 1677/1689 Baptist Confession of faith.[1]

This catechism, much like the 1689 Baptist Confession and the 1693 Baptist Catechism demonstrates the congeniality that these Baptist Puritans shared with their reformed, protestant contemporaries in the Christian faith. By utilizing the Heidelberg Catechism, Collins remains within the stream of the reformed tradition while expressing his own conviction of believer's baptism.

It is our desire that this catechism along with the 1689 Baptist Confession of faith and the 1693 Baptist Catechism authored by Williams Collins (no relation to Hercules Collins) would once again be utilized in the evangelizing, teaching and training of the children in our churches and homes. That they would, as in the

[1] Steve Weaver and Michael Haykin edited a reprinting of this catechism available through Reformed Baptist Academic Press: www.rbap.net

past, aid our churches in preserving those precious truths that are "most surely believed amongst us".

Parents and grandparents, gather the children in your life around, and together explore through the questions and answers offered in the Catechism. Read the proof texts and then add your own as the Spirit leads your time together. Allow me to offer a small bit of advice, be certain to record the date you read and discuss a question, also jot down any additional thoughts or scriptures each child may contribute. This will allow you to observe through the years how they have grown in their understanding of the material.

When done daily, a solid and biblical foundation will begin to be established in the hearts and minds of your children. In time and according to God's plans, they will be equipped to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

Your affectionate servant in Christ,

D.W. Barger

Table of Contents

Preface

Unto the Church of Christ, who upon Confession of Faith have been Baptized, Meeting in Old-Gravel Lane London, Grace Mercy and Peace be multiplied unto you, and the good will of him which dwelt in the Bush be with your Spirits, Amen.

Dearly Beloved,

Forasmuch as there is but a small time allotted unto any of us in this World, and not knowing but my staff standeth next the door ready to depart, I am desirous in this respect so to bestow my precious and present time in my Lord's business, as I may not return to him with my talent wrapped up in a napkin, but may leave behind me some poor token and testimony of my love and duty towards Him, and his blessed spouse the Church.

And forasmuch as the day we live in is very gloomy and dark, full of Error and Heresy, which spreads more and more (through the indefatigable endeavors of the maintainers of it) like an overflowing leprosy, and eateth as doth a canker.

Also considering it is a day of great declension in love to God and one to another also, from those gospel truths, the least of which is more worth then our lives: all which may give God just cause to say to England's Professors, as once to Israel, “What iniquity have your fathers found in Me that they are gone away far from me? As if God should say, “Am I not the same as

ever in Power, Goodness, Faithfulness? is not My Word and Ordinances the same, yea my Promises and Heaven the same now as ever?"

Now that you may not be shaken, shattered and carried away with every wind and blast, every puff and breath of Error, and Heresy; also that you may be the better established, strengthened, and settled on that sure Rock and Foundation of Salvation, Christ's Merits, in opposition to the poor imperfect works of an impotent creature; also settled on the foundation of church-constitution, on which you are already built, through the grace of God which stirred you up to search the divine oracle, and Rule of Divine service, as Ezra and Nehemiah searched into the particular parts of God's worship, by which means they came to the practice of that almost lost ordinance of God, the Feast of Tabernacles, which for many years was not practiced after the due order, though a general notion was retained about it; I say, under these considerations, I have in charitable regard to your souls, presented you with this small (but I am bold to say) sound piece of divinity, which may not unsuitably be styled an abridgment, or epitome[2] of law and gospel, suited to every ones capacity in God's house. Here is milk for babes, and meat for strong men. It may not unsuitably be compared to the waters of the sanctuary, where some may go up to the ankles, others to the

[2] A condensed account.

knees, others to the loins, and they are deep enough for others to swim in. Here you are not only taught to be good Christians, but good moralists, the wane of which among them that have the leaves and lamps of profession (as it is to be feared such have little more) is of a heart-breaking consideration to many that desire to walk with God.

Now albeit here may be many things which some of you may know already, yet unto such those things I hope will be acceptable as St. Peter's epistles were to the scattered Saints, though they knew much of the matter before, yet I dare say here is some things which may be for information as well as establishment to the most knowing among you.

I have not undertaken to present you with new notions or principles, hoping an Athenian Spirit is in none of you, but do believe that an old gospel (to you that have tasted the sweetness of it) will be more acceptable than a new, though published by an angel from Heaven.

In what I have written you will see I concenter with the most orthodox divines in the fundamental principles and articles of the Christian faith, and also have industriously expressed them in the same words, which have on the like occasion been spoken, only differing in some things about church-constitution, wherein I have taken a little pains to show you the true form of God's house, with the coming in thereof, and the going out thereof. But I hope my zeal in this will not be misinterpreted by any that

truly fear God. That God whom we serve is very jealous of his worship; and forasmuch as by His providence the Law of His house hath been preserved and continued to us, we look upon it as our duty in our generation to be searching out the mind of God in His holy oracle, as Ezra and Nehemiah did the feast of Tabernacles, and to reform what is amiss, As Hezekiah, who took a great deal of pains to cleanse the House of God, and set all things in order, that were out of order, particularly caused the people to keep the Passover according to the institution. For it had not, saith the text, been of a long time kept in such sort as it was written. And albeit the pure institutions of Christ were not for some hundreds of years practiced according to the due order, or very little through the innovations of antichrist; and as circumcision for about forty years was unpracticed in the wilderness, yet as Joshua puts this duty in practice as soon as God signified his mind in that particular, so we having our judgments informed about the true way of Worship, do not dare to stifle the Light God hath given us.

Now albeit there are some differences between many godly divines and us in church constitution, yet inasmuch as those things are not the essence of Christianity, but that we do agree in the fundamental doctrine thereof, there is sufficient ground to lay aside all bitterness and prejudice, and labor to maintain a spirit of love each to other, knowing we shall never see all alike here. We find in the primitive times that the baptism

of Christ was not universally know. Witness the ignorance of Apollos that eminent disciple and minister, which know only the baptism of John. And if God shall enlighten any into any truth, which they shall stifle for base and unwarrantable ends, know that it is God must judge, and not man. And wherein we cannot concur, let us leave that to the coming of Christ Jesus, as they did their difficult cases in the Church of old until there did arise a priest with Urim and Thummin, that might certainly inform them of the mind of God thereabout.

I have proposed three creeds to your consideration, which ought thoroughly to be believed and embraced by all those that would be accounted Christians, viz. the Nicene Creed, Athanasian Creed, and the Creed commonly called the Apostles. The last of which contains the sum of the Gospel, which is industriously opened and explained. And I beseech you do not slight it because of its form, nor antiquity, nor because supposed to be composed by men; neither because some that hold it maintain some errors, or whose conversation may not be correspondent to such fundamental principles of salvation; but take this for a perpetual rule, that whatever is good in any, owned by any, whatever error or vice it may be mixed withal, the good must not be rejected for the error or vice sake, but owned, commended, and accepted. Here is also in the close of the Book a brief, but full exposition of that prayer Christ taught His disciples. Also, the Decalogue, or Ten Commandments unfolded.

Now forasmuch as I have taken a great deal of pains in gathering these broken fragments together for your utility and profit, I hope you will take a little pains to read it, and more to live it; and I pray do it seriously and observingly. Reade it humbly and frequently, read it with prayer and meditation, then am I sure thou who art a true Christian wilt love it more & more. And as you love your own souls, love your children's, and declare it in praying for them, as Job did for his, and instructing them as Abraham did his, also winning them to good by a good example. And that this book may be of advantage to youth as well as others, it is catechistically handled for their easier learning the principles of Christian religion, that so they being seasoned with the true articles of Christian Faith, may not so easily be tainted with the sentiments of men of corrupt minds in time of temptation. And it is heartily desired that parents, especially professing ones, were more concerned for the everlasting welfare of their children, as David was for Solomon, when he charged him near his death to keep the commandments and judgments of God above all. And if Parents would but conscientiously read those Divine oracles which hold forth their duty to their children, it would doubtless be to them of great advantage.

As for this that I have presented to public view, I beg the reader's kind indulgence as to the faults escaped therein. And for

those whom the Lord hath committed to my charge, that the eternal God may be your refuge, and underneath you everlasting arms; that Grace may be opened to your hearts, and your hearts to grace; that the blessing of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob may be upon you, and the eternal Spirit may be with you, shall be the prayer of your unworthy brother, but more unworthy pastor,

H.C.

Lesson 1

Question 1:

What is your only comfort in life and in death?

Answer:

That I am not my own, (a) but belong -- body and soul, in life and in death (b) to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ. (c)

He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood,(d) and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil.(e) He also watches over me in such a way (f) that not a hair can fall from my head without the will of my Father in heaven(g) in fact, all things must work together for my salvation.(h)

Because I belong to him, Christ, by his Holy Spirit, assures me of eternal life(i) and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him.(j)

(a) 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

(b) Romans 14:7-9

(c) 1 Corinthians 3:23 Titus 2:14

(d) 1 Peter 1:18-19 1 John 1:7-9 1 John 2:2

(e) John 8:34-36 Hebrews 2:14-15 1 John 3:1-11

(f) John 6:39-40 John 10:27-30 2 Thessalonians 3:3 1 Peter 1:5

(g) Matthew 10:29 Luke 21:16-18

(h) Romans 8:28

(i) Romans 8:15-16 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 2 Corinthians 5:5 Ephesians 1:13-14

(j) Romans 8:1-17

Question 2:

What must you know to live and die in the joy of this comfort?

Answer:

Three things: first, how great my sin and misery are;(a) second, how I am set free from all my sins and misery;(b) third, how I am to thank God for such deliverance.(c)

(a) Romans 3:9-10 1 John 1:10
(b) John 17:3 Acts 4:12
(c) Matthew 5:16 Romans 6:13 Ephesians 5:8-10 2 Timothy 2:15 1 Peter 2:9-10

Human Misery

(Lessons 2 – 4)

Lesson 2 (Q.3-5)

Question 3:

How do you come to know your misery?

Answer:

The law of God tells me. (a)

(a) Romans 3:20 Romans 7:7-25

Question 4:

What does God's law require of us?

Answer:

Christ teaches us this in summary in Matthew 22:37-40 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.(a) This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. (b) All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.

(a) Deuteronomy 6:5
(b) Leviticus 19:18

Question 5:

Can you live up to all this perfectly?

Answer:

No. I have a natural tendency to hate God (a) and my neighbor.(b)

(a) Romans 3:9-20, 23 1 John 1:8, 10

(b) Genesis 6:5 Jeremiah 17:9 Romans 7:23-24 Romans 8:7 Ephesians 2:1-3 Titus 3:3

Lesson 3 (Q.6-8)

Question 6:

Did God create people so wicked and perverse?

Answer:

No. God created them good (a) and in his own image, (b) that is, in true righteousness and holiness, (c) so that they might truly know God their creator, (d) love him with all their heart, and live with him in eternal happiness for his praise and glory. (e)

(a) Genesis 1:31

(b) Genesis 1:26-27

(c) Ephesians 4:24

(d) Colossians 3:10

(e) Psalms 8:1-9

Question 7:

Then where does this corrupt human nature come from?

Answer:

From the fall and disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Paradise.(a) This fall has so poisoned our nature (b) that we are born sinners-- corrupt from conception on. (c)

(a) Genesis 3:1-24
(b) Romans 5:12 Romans 5:18-19
(c) Psalms 51:5

Question 8:

But are we so corrupt that we are totally unable to do any good and inclined toward all evil?

Answer:

Yes,(a) unless we are born again, by the Spirit of God. (b)

(a) Genesis 6:5 Genesis 8:21 Job 14:4 Isaiah 53:6
(b) John 3:3-5

Lesson 4 (Q.9-11)

Question 9:

But doesn't God do us an injustice by requiring in his law what we are unable to do?

Answer:

No, God created humans with the ability to keep the law.(a) They, however, tempted by the devil,(b) in reckless disobedience,(c) robbed themselves and all their descendants of these gifts.(d)

(a) Gen. 1:31; Eph. 4:24
(b) Gen. 3:13; John 8:44
(c) Gen. 3:6
(d) Rom. 5:12, 18, 19

Question 10:

Will God permit such disobedience and rebellion to go unpunished?

Answer:

Certainly not. He is terribly angry about the sin we are born with as well as the sins we personally commit. As a just judge he punishes them now and in eternity.(a) He has declared: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.(b)

(a) Ex. 34:7; Ps. 5:4-6; Nah. 1:2; Rom. 1:18; Eph. 5:6; Heb. 9:27
(b) Gal. 3:10; Deut. 27:26

Question 11:

But isn't God also merciful?

Answer:

God is certainly merciful, (a) but he is also just.(b) His justice demands that sin, committed against his supreme majesty, be punished with the supreme penalty--eternal punishment of body and soul.(c)

- (a) Ex. 34:6-7; Ps. 103:8-9
- (b) Ex. 34:7; Deut. 7:9-11; Ps. 5:4-6; Heb. 10:30-31
- (c) Matt. 25:35-46

Deliverance

(Lessons 5-8)

Lesson 5 (Q. 12-15)

Question 12:

According to God's righteous judgment we deserve punishment both in this world and forever after: how then can we escape this punishment and return to God's favor?

Answer:

God requires that his justice be satisfied.(a) Therefore the claims of his justice must be paid in full, either by ourselves or another. (b)

(a) Ex. 23:7; Rom. 2:1-11
(b) Isa. 53:11; Rom. 8:3-4

Question 13:

Can we pay this debt ourselves?

Answer:

Certainly not. Actually, we increase our guilt every day.(a)

(a) Matt. 6:12; Rom. 2:4-5

Question 14:

Can another creature--any at all--pay this debt for us?

Answer:

No. To begin with, God will not punish another creature for what a human is guilty of.(a) Besides, no mere creature can bear the weight of God's eternal anger against sin and release others from it.(b)

(a) Ezek. 18:4, 20; Heb. 2:14-18
(b) Ps. 49:7-9; 130:3

Question 15:

What kind of mediator and deliverer should we look for then?

Answer:

One who is truly human(a) and truly righteous,(b) yet more powerful than all creatures, that is, one who is also true God.(c)

(a) Rom. 1:3; 1 Cor. 15:21; Heb. 2:17
(b) Isa. 53:9; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 7:26
(c) Isa. 7:14; 9:6; Jer. 23:6; John 1:1

Lesson 6 (Q. 16-19)

Question 16:

Why must he be truly human and truly righteous?

Answer:

God's justice demands that human nature, which has sinned, must pay for its sin;(a) but a sinner could never pay for others.(b)

(a) Rom. 5:12, 15; 1 Cor. 15:21; Heb. 2:14-16
(b) Heb. 7:26-27; 1 Pet. 3:18

Question 17:

Why must he also be true God?

Answer:

So that, by the power of his divinity, he might bear the weight of God's anger in his humanity and earn for us and restore to us righteousness and life.(a)

Isa. 53; John 3:16; 2 Cor. 5:21

Question 18:

And who is this mediator--true God and at the same time truly human and truly righteous?

Answer:

Our Lord Jesus Christ,(a) who was given us to set us completely free and to make us right with God.(b)

(a) Matt. 1:21-23; Luke 2:11; 1 Tim. 2:5
(b) 1 Cor. 1:30

Question 19:

How do you come to know this?

Answer:

The holy gospel tells me. God himself began to reveal the gospel already in Paradise;(a) later, he proclaimed it by the holy patriarchs(b) and prophets,(c) and portrayed it by the sacrifices and other ceremonies of the law;(d) finally, he fulfilled it through his own dear Son.(e)

(a) Gen. 3:15
(b) Gen. 22:18; 49:10
(c) Isa. 53; Jer. 23:5-6; Mic. 7:18-20; Acts 10:43; Heb. 1:1-2
(d) Lev. 1-7; John 5:46; Heb. 10:1-10
(e) Rom. 10:4; Gal. 4:4-5; Col. 2:17

Lesson 7 (Q. 20-23)

Question 20:

Are all saved through Christ just as all were lost through Adam?

Answer:

No. Only those are saved who by true faith are grafted into Christ and accept all his blessings. (a)

(a) Matt. 7:14; John 3:16, 18, 36; Rom. 11:16-21

Question 21:

What is true faith?

Answer:

True faith is not only a knowledge and conviction that everything God reveals in his Word is true;(a) it is also a deep-rooted assurance,(b) created in me by the Holy Spirit(c) through the gospel,(d) that, out of sheer grace earned for us by Christ,€ not only others, but I too,(f) have had my sins forgiven, have been made forever right with God, and have been granted salvation.(g)

(a) John 17:3, 17; Heb. 11:1-3; James 2:19
(b) Rom. 4:18-21; 5:1; 10:10; Heb. 4:14-16
(c) Matt. 16:15-17; John 3:5; Acts 16:14
(d) Rom. 1:16; 10:17; 1 Cor. 1:21
(e) Rom. 3:21-26; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8-10
(f) Gal. 2:20
(g) Rom. 1:17; Heb. 10:10

Question 22:

What then must a Christian believe?

Answer:

Everything God promises us in the gospel.(a) That gospel is summarized for us in the articles of our Christian faith--a creed beyond doubt, and confessed throughout the world.

(a) Matt. 28:18-20; John 20:30-31

Question 23:

What are these articles?

Answer:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Lesson 8 (Q. 24-25)

Question 24:

How are these articles divided?

Answer:

Into three parts: God the Father and our creation; God the Son and our deliverance; God the Holy Spirit and our sanctification.

Question 25:

Since there is but one God, (a) why do you speak of three: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

Answer:

Because that is how God has revealed himself in his Word: these three distinct persons are one, true, eternal God.(b)

(a) Deut. 6:4; 1 Cor. 8:4, 6

(b) Matt. 3:16-17; 28:18-19; Luke 4:18 (Isa. 61:1); John 14:26; 15:26; 2 Cor. 13:14; Gal. 4:6; Tit. 3:5-6

God the Father

(Lessons 9-10)

Lesson 9 (Q. 26-28)

Question 26:

What do you believe when you say, "I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth"?

Answer:

That the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who out of nothing created heaven and earth and everything in them,(a) who still upholds and rules them by his eternal counsel and providence,(b) is my God and Father because of Christ his Son.(c) I trust him so much that I do not doubt he will provide whatever I need for body and soul,(d) and he will turn to my good whatever adversity he sends me in this sad world.(e) He is able to do this because he is almighty God;(f) he desires to do this because he is a faithful Father.(g)

(a) Gen. 1 & 2; Ex. 20:11; Ps. 33:6; Isa. 44:24; Acts 4:24; 14:15
(b) Ps. 104; Matt. 6:30; 10:29; Eph. 1:11
(c) John 1:12-13; Rom. 8:15-16; Gal. 4:4-7; Eph. 1:5
(d) Ps. 55:22; Matt. 6:25-26; Luke 12:22-31
(e) Rom. 8:28
(f) Gen. 18:14; Rom. 8:31-39
(g) Matt. 7:9-11

Lesson 10 (Q. 27-28)

Question 27:

What do you understand by the providence of God?

Answer:

Providence is the almighty and ever present power of God (a) by which he upholds, as with his hand, heaven and earth and all creatures,(b) and so rules them that leaf and blade, rain and drought, fruitful and lean years, food and drink, health and sickness, prosperity and poverty—(c) all things, in fact, come to us not by chance(d) but from his fatherly hand.(e)

- (a) Jer. 23:23-24; Acts 17:24-28
- (b) Heb. 1:3
- (c) Jer. 5:24; Acts 14:15-17; John 9:3; Prov. 22:2
- (d) Prov. 16:33
- (e) Matt. 10:29

Question 28:

How does the knowledge of God's creation and providence help us?

Answer:

We can be patient when things go against us,(a) thankful when things go well,(b) and for the future we can have good confidence in our faithful God and Father that nothing will separate us from his love.(c) All creatures are so completely in his hand that without his will they can neither move nor be moved.(d)

(a) Job 1:21-22; James 1:3
(b) Deut. 8:10; 1 Thess. 5:18
(c) Ps. 55:22; Rom. 5:3-5; 8:38-39
(d) Job 1:12; 2:6; Prov. 21:1; Acts 17:24-28

God the Son

(Lessons 11-19)

Lesson 11 (Q. 29-30)

Question 29:

Why is the Son of God called "Jesus," meaning "savior"?

Answer:

Because he saves us from our sins.(a) Salvation cannot be found in anyone else; it is futile to look for any salvation elsewhere.(b)

(a) Matt. 1:21; Heb. 7:25
(b) Isa. 43:11; John 15:5; Acts 4:11-12; 1 Tim. 2:5

Question 30:

Do those who look for their salvation and security in saints, in themselves, or elsewhere really believe in the only savior Jesus?

Answer:

No. Although they boast of being his, by their deeds they deny the only savior and deliverer, Jesus.(a) Either Jesus is not a perfect savior, or those who in true faith accept this savior have in him all they need for their salvation.(b)

(a) 1 Cor. 1:12-13; Gal. 5:4
(b) Col. 1:19-20; 2:10; 1 John 1:7

Lesson 12 (Q. 31-32)

Question 31:

Why is he called "Christ," meaning "anointed"?

Answer:

Because he has been ordained by God the Father and has been anointed with the Holy Spirit (a) to be our chief prophet and teacher(b) who perfectly reveals to us the secret counsel and will of God for our deliverance;(c) our only high priest(d) who has set us free by the one sacrifice of his body,(e) and who continually pleads our cause with the Father;(f) and our eternal king(g) who governs us by his Word and Spirit, and who guards us and keeps us in the freedom he has won for us.(h)

- (a) Luke 3:21-22; 4:14-19; Isa. 61:1; Heb. 1:9; Ps. 45:7
- (b) Acts 3:22; Deut. 18:15
- (c) John 1:18; 15:15
- (d) Heb. 7:17; Ps. 110:4
- (e) Heb. 9:12; 10:11-14
- (f) Rom. 8:34; Heb. 9:24
- (g) Matt. 21:5; Zech. 9:9
- (h) Matt. 28:18-20; John 10:28; Rev. 12:10-11

Question 32:

But why are you called a Christian?

Answer:

Because by faith I am a member of Christ(a) and so I share in his anointing.(b) I am anointed to confess his name,(c) to present myself to him as a living sacrifice of thanks,(d) to strive with a good conscience against sin and the devil in this life,(e) and afterward to reign with Christ over all creation for all eternity.(f)

(a) 1 Cor. 12:12-27Acts 3:22 (Deut. 18:15)
(b) Acts 2:17 (Joel 2:28); 1 John 2:27
(c) Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:9-10; Heb. 13:15
(d) Rom. 12:1; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9
(e) Gal. 5:16-17; Eph. 6:11; 1 Tim. 1:18-19
(f) Matt. 25:34; 2 Tim. 2:12

Lesson 13 (Q. 33-34)

Question 33:

Why is he called God's "only Son" when we also are God's children?

Answer:

Because Christ alone is the eternal, natural Son of God.(a) We, however, are adopted children of God--adopted by grace through Christ.(b)

(a) John 1:1-3, 14, 18; Heb. 1
(b) John 1:12; Rom. 8:14-17; Eph. 1:5-6

Question 34:

Why do you call him "our Lord"?

Answer:

Because--not with gold or silver, but with his precious blood—(a) he has set us free from sin and from the tyranny of the devil,(b) and has bought us, body and soul, to be his very own.(c)

(a) 1 Pet. 1:18-19
(b) Col. 1:13-14; Heb. 2:14-15
(c) 1 Cor. 6:20; 1 Tim. 2:5-6

Lesson 14 (Q. 35-36)

Question 35:

What does it mean that he "was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary"?

Answer:

That the eternal Son of God, who is and remains true and eternal God,(a) took to himself, through the working of the Holy Spirit,(b) from the flesh and blood of the virgin Mary,(c) a truly human nature so that he might become David's true descendant,(d) like his brothers in every way5 except for sin.(e)

(a) John 1:1; 10:30-36; Acts 13:33 (Ps. 2:7); Col. 1:15-17; 1 John 5:20
(b) Luke 1:35
(c) Matt. 1:18-23; John 1:14; Gal. 4:4; Heb. 2:14
(d) 2 Sam. 7:12-16; Ps. 132:11; Matt. 1:1; Rom. 1:3

(e) Phil. 2:7; Heb. 2:17
(f) Heb. 4:15; 7:26-27

Question 36:

How does the holy conception and birth of Christ benefit you?

Answer:

He is our mediator,(a) and with his innocence and perfect holiness he removes from God's sight my sin--mine since I was conceived.(b)

(a) 1 Tim. 2:5-6; Heb. 9:13-15
(b) Rom. 8:3-4; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 4:4-5; 1 Pet. 1:18-19

Lesson 15 (Q. 37-39)

Question 37:

What do you understand by the word "suffered"?

Answer:

That during his whole life on earth, but especially at the end, Christ sustained in body and soul the anger of God against the sin of the whole human race.(a) This he did in order that, by his suffering as the only atoning sacrifice,(b) he might set us free, body and soul, from eternal condemnation,(c) and gain for us God's grace, righteousness, and eternal life.(d)

(a) Isa. 53; 1 Pet. 2:24; 3:18
(b) Rom. 3:25; Heb. 10:14; 1 John 2:2; 4:10
(c) Rom. 8:1-4; Gal. 3:13
(d) John 3:16; Rom. 3:24-26

Question 38:

Why did he suffer "under Pontius Pilate" as judge?

Answer:

So that he, though innocent, might be condemned by a civil judge, (a) and so free us from the severe judgment of God that was to fall on us. (b)

(a) Luke 23:13-24; John 19:4, 12-16
(b) Isa. 53:4-5; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13

Question 39:

Is it significant that he was "crucified" instead of dying some other way?

Answer:

Yes. This death convinces me that he shouldered the curse which lay on me, since death by crucifixion was accursed by God. (a)

(a) Gal. 3:10-13; Deut. 21:23

Lesson 16 (Q. 40-44)

Question 40:

Why did Christ have to go all the way to death?

Answer:

Because God's justice and truth demand it: (a) only the death of God's Son could pay for our sin. (b)

(a) Gen. 2:17
(b) Rom. 8:3-4; Phil. 2:8; Heb. 2:9

Question 41:

Why was he "buried"?

Answer:

His burial testifies that he really died. (a)

(a) Isa. 53:9; John 19:38-42; Acts 13:29; 1 Cor. 15:3-4

Question 42:

Since Christ has died for us, why do we still have to die?

Answer:

Our death does not pay the debt of our sins.(a) Rather, it puts an end to our sinning and is our entrance into eternal life. (b)

(a) Ps. 49:7
(b) John 5:24; Phil. 1:21-23; 1 Thess. 5:9-10

Question 43:

What further advantage do we receive from Christ's sacrifice and death on the cross?

Answer:

Through Christ's death our old selves are crucified, put to death, and buried with him,(a) so that the evil desires of the flesh may no longer rule us,(b) but that instead we may dedicate ourselves as an offering of gratitude to him.(c)

(a) Rom. 6:5-11; Col. 2:11-12
(b) Rom. 6:12-14
(c) Rom. 12:1; Eph. 5:1-2

Question 44:

Why does the creed add, "He descended to hell"?

Answer:

To assure me in times of personal crisis and temptation that Christ my Lord, by suffering unspeakable anguish, pain, and terror of soul, especially on the cross but also earlier, has delivered me from the anguish and torment of hell. (a)

(a) Isa. 53; Matt. 26:36-46; 27:45-46; Luke 22:44; Heb. 5:7-10

Lesson 17 (Q. 45)

Question 45:

How does Christ's resurrection benefit us?

Answer:

First, by his resurrection he has overcome death, so that he might make us share in the righteousness he won for us by his death. (a) Second, by his power we too are already now resurrected to a new life.(b) Third, Christ's resurrection is a guarantee of our glorious resurrection.(c)

(a) Rom. 4:25; 1 Cor. 15:16-20; 1 Pet. 1:3-5
(b) Rom. 6:5-11; Eph. 2:4-6; Col. 3:1-4
(c) Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 15:12-23; Phil. 3:20-21

Lesson 18 (Q. 46-49)

Question 46:

What do you mean by saying, "He ascended to heaven"?

Answer:

That Christ, while his disciples watched, was lifted up from the earth to heaven (a) and will be there for our good(b) until he comes again to judge the living and the dead.(c)

(a) Luke 24:50-51; Acts 1:9-11
(b) Rom. 8:34; Eph. 4:8-10; Heb. 7:23-25; 9:24
(c) Acts 1:11

Question 47:

But isn't Christ with us until the end of the world as he promised us?(a)

Answer:

Christ is truly human and truly God. In his human nature Christ is not now on earth;(b) but in his divinity, majesty, grace, and Spirit he is not absent from us for a moment.(c)

(a) Matt. 28:20
(b) Acts 1:9-11; 3:19-21
(c) Matt. 28:18-20; John 14:16-19

Question 48:

If his humanity is not present wherever his divinity is, then aren't the two natures of Christ separated from each other?

Answer:

Certainly not. Since divinity is not limited and is present everywhere,(a) it is evident that Christ's divinity is surely beyond the bounds of the humanity he has taken on, but at the same time his divinity is in and remains personally united to his humanity.(b)

(a) Jer. 23:23-24; Acts 7:48-49 (Isa. 66:1)
(b) John 1:14; 3:13; Col. 2:9

Question 49:

How does Christ's ascension to heaven benefit us?

Answer:

First, he pleads our cause in heaven in the presence of his Father.(a) Second, we have our own flesh in heaven--a guarantee that Christ our head will take us, his members, to himself in heaven.(b) Third, he sends his Spirit to us on earth as a further guarantee.(c) By the Spirit's power we make the goal of our lives, not earthly things, but the things above where Christ is, sitting at God's right hand.(d)

(a) Jer. 23:23-24; Acts 7:48-49; Isa. 66:1
(b) John 14:2; 17:24; Eph. 2:4-6
(c) John 14:16; 2 Cor. 1:21-22; 5:5
(d) Col. 3:1-4

Lesson 19 (Q. 50-52)

Question 50:

Why the next words: "and is seated at the right hand of God"?

Answer:

Christ ascended to heaven, there to show that he is head of his church,(a) and that the Father rules all things through him.(b)

(a) Eph. 1:20-23; Col. 1:18
(b) Matt. 28:18; John 5:22-23

Question 51:

How does this glory of Christ our head benefit us?

Answer:

First, through his Holy Spirit he pours out his gifts from heaven upon us his members. (a) Second, by his power he defends us and keeps us safe from all enemies. (b)

(a) Acts 2:33; Eph. 4:7-12
(b) Ps. 110:1-2; John 10:27-30; Rev. 19:11-16

Question 52:

How does Christ's return "to judge the living and the dead" comfort you?

Answer:

In all my distress and persecution I turn my eyes to the heavens and confidently await as judge the very One who has already stood trial in my place before God and so has removed the whole curse from me. (a) All his enemies and mine he will condemn to everlasting punishment: but me and all his chosen ones he will take along with him into the joy and the glory of heaven. (b)

(a) Luke 21:28; Rom. 8:22-25; Phil. 3:20-21; Tit. 2:13-14
(b) Matt. 25:31-46; 2 Thess. 1:6-10

Lesson 19 (Q. 50-52)

Question 50:

Why the next words: "and is seated at the right hand of God"?

Answer:

Christ ascended to heaven, there to show that he is head of his church,(a) and that the Father rules all things through him.(b)

(a) Eph. 1:20-23; Col. 1:18

(b) Matt. 28:18; John 5:22-23

God the Holy Spirit

(Lessons 20-24)

Lesson 20 (Q. 53)

Question 53:

What do you believe concerning "the Holy Spirit"?

Answer:

First, he, as well as the Father and the Son, is eternal God.(a) Second, he has been given to me personally,(b) so that, by true faith, he makes me share in Christ and all his blessings,(c) comforts me,(d) and remains with me forever.(e)

(a) Gen. 1:1-2; Matt. 28:19; Acts 5:3-4
(b) 1 Cor. 6:19; 2 Cor. 1:21-22; Gal. 4:6
(c) Gal. 3:14
(d) John 15:26; Acts 9:31
(e) John 14:16-17; 1 Pet. 4:14

Lesson 21 (Q. 54-56)

Question 54:

What do you believe concerning "the holy catholic church"?

Answer:

I believe that the Son of God through his Spirit and Word,(a) out of the entire human race,(b) from the beginning of the world to its end,(c) gathers, protects, and preserves for himself a

community chosen for eternal life(d) and united in true faith.(e) And of this community I am(f) and always will be(g) a living member.

(a) John 10:14-16; Acts 20:28; Rom. 10:14-17; Col. 1:18
(b) Gen. 26:3b-4; Rev. 5:9
(c) Isa. 59:21; 1 Cor. 11:26
(d) Matt. 16:18; John 10:28-30; Rom. 8:28-30; Eph. 1:3-14
(e) Acts 2:42-47; Eph. 4:1-6
(f) 1 John 3:14, 19-21
(g) John 10:27-28; 1 Cor. 1:4-9; 1 Pet. 1:3-5

Question 55:

What do you understand by "the communion of saints"?

Answer:

First, that believers one and all, as members of this community, share in Christ and in all his treasures and gifts.(a) Second, that each member should consider it a duty to use these gifts readily and cheerfully for the service and enrichment of the other members.(b)

(a) Rom. 8:32; 1 Cor. 6:17; 12:4-7, 12-13; 1 John 1:3
(b) Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:20-27; 13:1-7; Phil. 2:4-8

Question 56:

What do you believe concerning "the forgiveness of sins"?

Answer:

I believe that God, because of Christ's atonement, will never hold against me any of my sins(a) nor my sinful nature which I need to struggle against all my life.(b) Rather, in his grace God grants me the righteousness of Christ to free me forever from judgment.(c)

(a) Ps. 103:3-4, 10, 12; Mic. 7:18-19; 2 Cor. 5:18-21; 1 John 1:7; 2:2
(b) Rom. 7:21-25
(c) John 3:17-18; Rom. 8:1-2

Lesson 22 (Q. 57-58)

Question 57:

How does "the resurrection of the body" comfort you?

Answer:

Not only my soul will be taken immediately after this life to Christ its head,(a) but even my very flesh, raised by the power of Christ, will be reunited with my soul and made like Christ's glorious body.(b)

(a) Luke 23:43; Phil. 1:21-23hn 10:14-16; Acts 20:28; Rom. 10:14-17; Col. 1:18
(b) 1 Cor. 15:20, 42-46, 54; Phil. 3:21; 1 John 3:2

Question 58:

How does the article concerning "life everlasting" comfort you?

Answer:

Even as I already now experience in my heart the beginning of eternal joy, (a) so after this life I will have perfect blessedness such as no eye has seen, no ear has heard, no human heart has ever imagined: a blessedness in which to praise God eternally.(b)

(a) Rom. 14:17
(b) John 17:3; 1 Cor. 2:9

Answer:

Christ executes the office of a prophet, in revealing to us, by this Word and Spirit, the will of God for our salvation.
Jn. 1:18; 14:26; 15:15

Lesson 23 (Q. 59-61)

Question 59:

What good does it do you, however, to believe all this?

Answer:

In Christ I am right with God and heir to life everlasting. (a)

(a) John 3:36; Rom. 1:17 (Hab. 2:4); Rom. 5:1-2

Question 60:

How are you right with God?

Answer:

Only by true faith in Jesus Christ.(a) Even though my conscience accuses me of having grievously sinned against all God's commandments and of never having kept any of them,(b) and even though I am still inclined toward all evil,(c) nevertheless, without my deserving it at all,(d) out of sheer grace,(e) God grants and credits to me the perfect satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ,(f) as if I had never sinned nor been a sinner, as if I had been as perfectly obedient as Christ was obedient for me.(g) All I need to do is to accept this gift of God with a believing heart.(h)

- (a) Rom. 3:21-28; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8-9; Phil 3:8-11
- (b) Rom. 3:9-10
- (c) Rom. 7:23
- (d) Tit. 3:4-5
- (e) Rom. 3:24; Eph. 2:8
- (f) Rom. 4:3-5 (Gen. 15:6); 2 Cor. 5:17-19; 1 John 2:1-2
- (g) Rom. 4:24-25; 2 Cor. 5:21
- (h) John 3:18; Acts 16:30-31

Question 61:

Why do you say that by faith alone you are right with God?

Answer:

It is not because of any value my faith has that God is pleased with me. Only Christ's satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness

make me right with God.(a) And I can receive this righteousness and make it mine in no other way than by faith alone.(b)

(a) 1 Cor. 1:30-31
(b) Rom. 10:10; 1 John 5:10-12

Lesson 24 (Q. 62-64)

Question 62:

Why can't the good we do make us right with God, or at least help make us right with him?

Answer:

Because the righteousness which can pass God's scrutiny must be entirely perfect and must in every way measure up to the divine law. (a) Even the very best we do in this life is imperfect and stained with sin. (b)

(a) Rom. 3:20; Gal. 3:10; Deut. 27:26
(b) Isa. 64:6

Question 63:

How can you say that the good we do doesn't earn anything when God promises to reward it in this life and the next? (a)

Answer:

This reward is not earned; it is a gift of grace. (b)

(a) Matt. 5:12; Heb. 11:6
(b) Luke 17:10; 2 Tim. 4:7-8

Question 64:

But doesn't this teaching make people indifferent and wicked?

Answer:

No. It is impossible for those grafted into Christ by true faith not to produce fruits of gratitude. (a)

(a) Luke 6:43-45; John 15:5

The Sacraments

Lesson 25

Lesson 25 (Q. 65-68)

Question 65:

It is by faith alone that we share in Christ and all his blessings: where then does that faith come from?

Answer:

The Holy Spirit produces it in our hearts (a) by the preaching of the holy gospel, (b) and confirms it through our use of the holy sacraments.(c)

(a) John 3:5; 1 Cor. 2:10-14; Eph. 2:8
(b) Rom. 10:17; 1 Pet. 1:23-25
(c) Matt. 28:19-20; 1 Cor. 10:16

Question 66:

What are sacraments?

Answer:

Sacraments are holy signs and seals for us to see. They were instituted by God so that by our use of them he might make us understand more clearly the promise of the gospel, and might put his seal on that promise. (a) And this is God's gospel promise: to forgive our sins and give us eternal life by grace alone because of Christ's one sacrifice finished on the cross. (b)

(a) Gen. 17:11; Deut. 30:6; Rom. 4:11
(b) Matt. 26:27-28; Acts 2:38; Heb. 10:10

Question 67:

Are both the word and the sacraments then intended to focus our faith on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross as the only ground of our salvation?

Answer:

Right! In the gospel the Holy Spirit teaches us and through the holy sacraments he assures us that our entire salvation rests on Christ's one sacrifice for us on the cross. (a)

(a) Rom. 6:3; 1 Cor. 11:26; Gal. 3:27

Question 68:

How many sacraments did Christ institute in the New Testament?

Answer:

Two: baptism and the Lord's Supper.(a)

(a) Matt. 28:19-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26

Baptism

(Lessons 26-28)

Lesson 26 (Q. 69-74)

Question 69:

What is Baptism?

Answer:

Immersion or dipping of the Person in Water in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, by such who are duly qualified by Christ. (a)

(a) Mat. 3.16. John 3.23. Acts 8.38, 39. Rom. 6.4

Question 70:

Who are the proper Subjects of this Ordinance?

Answer:

Those who do actually profess Repentance towards God, Faith in, and Obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ. (a)

(a) Acts 2.38. Acts 8.36, 37

Question 71:

Should infants, too, be baptized?

Answer:

No, for we have neither Precept nor Example for that Practice in all the Book of God.

Question 72:

Does the Scriptures forbid the Baptism of Infants?

Answer:

It is sufficient that the Divine Oracles commands the baptizing of Believers, unless we will make ourselves wiser than what is written. Nadab and Abihu were not forbidden to offer strange Fire, yet for doing so they incurred God's Wrath, because they were commanded to take Fire from the Altar. (a)

(a) Mat. 28.18, 19. Mark 16.16. Lev 9.24. 10.16

Question 73:

May not the infant children of believers under the Gospel be baptized since the infant descendants of Abraham were circumcised under the Law?

Answer:

No. Abraham had a command from God to circumcise his infant descendants, but believers have no command to baptize their infant children under the Gospel. (a)

(a) Gen. 17.9-12

Question 74:

If the infant children of believers are in the Covenant of Grace with their parents, as some say, why may they not be baptized under the Gospel, as well as Abraham's infant descendants were circumcised under the Law?

Answer:

By the infant children of Believers being in the Covenant of Grace, it must either be meant of the Covenant of Grace absolutely considered, and if so, then there can be no total and final falling away of any infant children of believers from the Covenant, but all must be saved. (a)

(a) Jer. 32:38-40; John 10.28

Or, they must mean conditionally, on consideration that when they come to an age of maturity, they by true faith, love, and holiness of life, taking hold of God's Covenant of Grace, shall

have the privileges of it. This being their sense, I then ask what real spiritual privilege the infant children of believers have more than the infant children of unbelievers, if they live also to years of maturity, and by true faith and love take hold God's Covenant? I further demand, whether the Seal of the Covenant does not belong as much to the children of unbelievers as to the children of believers? and more too, since some infant children of unbelievers take hold of God's Covenant, and some infant children of believers do not2; as this often occurs to the sorrow of many godly parents. (b)

(b) Isa. 56.3-8; Acts 10.34-35. John 3.16

Suppose all the infant children of believers are absolutely in the Covenant of Grace; believers under the Gospel should not baptize their infant children any more than Lot had warrant to circumcise himself or his infant children, although he was closely related to Abraham, a believer, and in the Covenant of Grace too: since circumcision was limited to Abraham and to his family. Also by the same rule we should bring infants to the Lord's Table, since the same qualifications are required for the proper administration of Baptism as for the Lord's Supper. (c)

(c) Acts 2.41, 42

We must know the covenant made with Abraham had two parts:

First, a spiritual, which consisted in God's promising to be a God to4 Abraham, and all his spiritual descendants in a particular manner, (d) whether they were circumcised or uncircumcised, who believed as Abraham the Father of the faithful did.(e) This was signified by God's accepting them as his people who were

not descended6 from Abraham, but through Jesus Christ, the Gentiles, the uncircumcised who believed, (f) should have their faith counted for righteousness, as Abraham's was before he was circumcised. (g)

(d) Gen. 17.19, 21. Gen. 21.10. Gal. 4.30
(e) Acts 2:39. Rom. 9.7-8
(f) Gal. 3:16, 28-29
(g) Rom. 4:9-14

Second, this promise consisted of temporal good: so God promised Abraham's Seed should enjoy the land of Canaan, and have plenty of outward blessings, (h) and sealed this promise by circumcision. It was also a distinguishing character of the Jews being God's people from all the Nations of the Gentiles, who were not yet the spiritual descendants of Abraham: but when the Gentiles came to believe, and by faith became the people of God as well as the Jews, (i) then Circumcision, that distinguishing mark, ceased. The character of being the children of God now is faith in Christ and circumcision of the Heart. Whatever reason may be given for the Infants of Believers to be Baptized first, as their being the children of believers; or secondly, their being in the Covenant; or thirdly, that the infant descendants of Abraham a believer, were circumcised; all this you see avails nothing: for circumcision was limited to the family of Abraham and all others, though believers, were excluded. It was also limited to a particular day, the eighth day, and what ever reason might be given, it was not to be done before or after. It was limited to male and did not include female; if Baptism came in the place of circumcision, and is the seal of the Covenant under the Gospel as circumcision was under the Law, none but the males must be

baptized, because none but the Males were Circumcised. But as the Law regulated circumcision, now the Gospel regulates Baptism, and it depends purely upon the will of the Law-giver, at what periods of time, upon what Persons and terms Baptism is to be administered. We will do well, then, to heed what is declared in Scripture. (j)

(h) Gen.12;6-7; 13.15-17; 15:16,18; 17:8-11
(i) John 1:12; Rom. 2:28-29; Phil. 3:3; Gal. 3:26-28
(j) Acts 3:22

Lesson 27 (Q. 75-77)

Question 75:

How does baptism remind you and assure you that Christ's one sacrifice on the cross is for you personally?

Answer:

In this way: Christ instituted this outward washing (a) and with it gave the promise that, as surely as water washes away the dirt from the body, so certainly his blood and his Spirit wash away my soul's impurity, in other words, all my sins. (b)

(a) Acts 2:38
(b) Matt. 3:11; Rom. 6:3-10; 1 Pet. 3:21

Question 76:

What does it mean to be washed with Christ's blood and Spirit?

Answer:

To be washed with Christ's blood means that God, by grace, has forgiven my sins because of Christ's blood poured out for me in his sacrifice on the cross.(a) To be washed with Christ's Spirit means that the Holy Spirit has renewed me and set me apart to be a member of Christ so that more and more I become dead to sin and increasingly live a holy and blameless life. (b)

(a) Zech. 13:1; Eph. 1:7-8; Heb. 12:24; 1 Pet. 1:2; Rev. 1:5

(b) Ezek. 36:25-27; John 3:5-8; Rom. 6:4; 1 Cor. 6:11; Col. 2:11-12

Question 77:

Where does Christ promise that we are washed with his blood and Spirit as surely as we are washed with the water of baptism?

Answer:

In the institution of baptism where he says: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (a) "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned."(b) This promise is repeated when Scripture calls baptism the washing of rebirth (c) and the washing away of sins. (d)

(a) Matt. 28:19

(b) Mark 16:16

(c) Titus 3:5

(d) Acts 22:16

Lesson 28 (Q. 78-79)

Question 78:

Does this outward washing with water itself wash away sins?

Answer:

No, only Jesus Christ's blood and the Holy Spirit cleanse us from all sins. (a)

(a) Matt. 3:11; 1 Pet. 3:21; 1 John 1:7

Question 79:

Why then does the Holy Spirit call baptism the washing of rebirth and the washing away of sins?

Answer:

God has good reason for these words. He wants to teach us that the blood and Spirit of Christ wash away our sins just as water washes away dirt from our bodies. (a) But more important, he wants to assure us, by this divine pledge and sign, that the washing away of our sins spiritually is as real as physical washing with water. (b)

(a) Matt. 3:11; 1 Pet. 3:21; 1 John 1:7

(b) Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:27

Of the Lord′s Supper

(Lessons 29-32)

Lesson 29 (Q. 80-82)

Question 80:

How does the Lord's Supper remind you and assure you that you share in Christ's one sacrifice on the cross and in all his gifts?

Answer:

In this way: Christ has commanded me and all believers to eat this broken bread and to drink this cup. With this command he gave this promise:1 First, as surely as I see with my eyes the bread of the Lord broken for me and the cup given to me, so surely his body was offered and broken for me and his blood poured out for me on the cross. Second, as surely as I receive from the hand of the one who serves, and taste with my mouth the bread and cup of the Lord, given me as sure signs of Christ's body and blood, so surely he nourishes and refreshes my soul for eternal life with his crucified body and poured-out blood. (a)

(a) Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-25

Question 81:

What does it mean to eat the crucified body of Christ and to drink his poured-out blood?

Answer:

It means to accept with a believing heart the entire suffering and death of Christ and by believing to receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life. (a) But it means more. Through the Holy Spirit, who lives both in Christ and in us, we are united more and more to Christ's blessed body. (b) And so, although he is in heaven (c) and we are on earth, we are flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone. (d) And we forever live on and are governed by one Spirit, as members of our body are by one soul. (e)

- (a) John 6:35, 40, 50-54
- (b) John 6:55-56; 1 Cor. 12:13
- (c) Acts 1:9-11; 1 Cor. 11:26; Col. 3:1
- (d) 1 Cor. 6:15-17; Eph. 5:29-30; 1 John 4:13
- (e) John 6:56-58; 15:1-6; Eph. 4:15-16; 1 John 3:24

Question 82:

Where does Christ promise to nourish and refresh believers with his body and blood as surely as they eat this broken bread and drink this cup?

Answer:

In the institution of the Lord's Supper: "The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given

thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."(a)

This promise is repeated by Paul in these words:
"Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf."(b)

(a) 1 Cor. 11:23-26
(b) 1 Cor. 10:16-17

Lesson 30 (Q. 83-84)

Question 83:

Are the bread and wine changed into the real body and blood of Christ?

Answer:

No. Just as the water of baptism is not changed into Christ's blood and does not itself wash away sins but is simply God's sign and assurance, (a) so too the bread of the Lord's Supper is not changed into the actual body of Christ (b) even though it is called the body of Christ (c) in keeping with the nature and language of sacraments. (d)

(a) Eph. 5:26; Tit. 3:5

(b) Matt. 26:26-29
(c) 1 Cor. 10:16-17; 11:26-28
(d) Gen. 17:10-11; Ex. 12:11, 13; 1 Cor. 10:1-4

Question 84:

Why then does Christ call the bread his body and the cup his blood, or the new covenant in his blood? And Paul uses the words, a participation in Christ's body and blood.

Answer:

Christ has good reason for these words. He wants to teach us that as bread and wine nourish our temporal life, so too his crucified body and poured-out blood truly nourish our souls for eternal life. (a) But more important, he wants to assure us, by this visible sign and pledge, that we, through the Holy Spirit's work, share in his true body and blood as surely as our mouths receive these holy signs in his remembrance, (b) and that all of his suffering and obedience are as definitely ours as if we personally had suffered and paid for our sins. (c)

(a) John 6:51, 55
(b) 1 Cor. 10:16-17; 11:26
(c) Rom. 6:5-11

Lesson 31 (Q. 85-88)

Question 85:

How does the Lord's Supper differ from the Roman Catholic Mass?

Answer:

The Lord's Supper declares to us that our sins have been completely forgiven through the one sacrifice of Jesus Christ which he himself finished on the cross once for all. (a) It also declares to us that the Holy Spirit grafts us into Christ, (b) who with his very body is now in heaven at the right hand of the Father (c) where he wants us to worship him. (d) But the Mass teaches that the living and the dead do not have their sins forgiven through the suffering of Christ unless Christ is still offered for them daily by the priests. It also teaches that Christ is bodily present in the form of bread and wine where Christ is therefore to be worshiped. Thus the Mass is basically nothing but a denial of the one sacrifice and suffering of Jesus Christ and a condemnable idolatry.

(a) John 19:30; Heb. 7:27; 9:12, 25-26; 10:10-18
(b) 1 Cor. 6:17; 10:16-17
(c) Acts 7:55-56; Heb. 1:3; 8:1
(d) Matt. 6:20-21; John 4:21-24; Phil. 3:20; Col. 3:1-3

Question 86:

Who are to come to the Lord's table?

Answer:

Those who are displeased with themselves because of their sins, but who nevertheless trust that their sins are pardoned and that their continuing weakness is covered by the suffering and death of Christ, and who also desire more and more to strengthen their faith and to lead a better life. Hypocrites and those who are unrepentant, however, eat and drink judgment on themselves. (a)

(a) 1 Cor. 10:19-22; 11:26-32

Question 87:

Are those to be admitted to the Lord's Supper who show by what they say and do that they are unbelieving and ungodly?

Answer:

No, that would dishonor God's covenant and bring down God's anger upon the entire congregation.1 Therefore, according to the instruction of Christ and his apostles, the Christian church is duty-bound to exclude such people, by the official use of the keys of the kingdom, until they reform their lives. (a)

(a) 1 Cor. 11:17-32; Ps. 50:14-16; Isa. 1:11-17

Question 88:

How should this Ordinance of the Lord's Supper be closed?

Answer:

In singing Praises to God vocally and audibly for his great Benefits and Blessings to his Church in the shedding of the most precious Blood of his Son to take away their Sin; which Blessings are pointed out in this Sacrament. Also we find our Lord and his Disciples did close this Ordinance in singing a Hymn or Psalm; and if Christ sang, who was going to die, what cause have we to sing for whom he died, that we might not eternally die, but live a spiritual and eternal life with Father, Son, and Spirit in inexpressible Glory. (a)

(a) Mat. 26.30

Lesson 32 (Q. 89-91)

Question 89:

What are the keys of the kingdom?

Answer:

The preaching of the holy gospel and Christian discipline toward repentance. Both preaching and discipline open the kingdom of heaven to believers and close it to unbelievers. (a)

(a) Matt. 16:19; John 20:22-23

Question 90:

How does preaching the gospel open and close the kingdom of heaven?

Answer::

The kingdom of heaven is opened by proclaiming and publicly declaring to all believers, each and every one, that, as often as they accept the gospel promise in true faith, God, because of what Christ has done, truly forgives all their sins.

The kingdom of heaven is closed, however, by proclaiming and publicly declaring to unbelievers and hypocrites that, as long as they do not repent, the anger of God and eternal condemnation rest on them. God's judgment, both in this life and in the life to come, is based on this gospel testimony.(a)

(a) Matt. 16:19; John 3:31-36; 20:21-23

Question 91:

How is the kingdom of heaven closed and opened by Christian discipline?

Answer:

Those who, though called Christians, profess unchristian teachings or live unchristian lives, and after repeated and loving counsel refuse to abandon their errors and wickedness, and after being reported to the church, that is, to its officers, fail to respond also to their admonition--such persons the officers exclude from the Christian fellowship by withholding the sacraments from them, and God himself excludes them from the

kingdom of Christ. (a) Such persons, when promising and demonstrating genuine reform, are received again as members of Christ and of his church. (b)

(a) Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5:3-5, 11-13; 2 Thess. 3:14-15
(b) Luke 15:20-24; 2 Cor. 2:6-11

Gratitude

(Lessons 33-45)

Lesson 33 (Q. 92-93)

Question 92:

We have been delivered from our misery by God's grace alone through Christ and not because we have earned it: why then must we still do good?

Answer:

To be sure, Christ has redeemed us by his blood. But we do good because Christ by his Spirit is also renewing us to be like himself, so that in all our living we may show that we are thankful to God for all he has done for us,(a) and so that he may be praised through us.(b) And we do good so that we may be assured of our faith by its fruits,(c) and so that by our godly living our neighbors may be won over to Christ. (d)

(a) Rom. 6:13; 12:1-2; 1 Pet. 2:5-10
(b) Matt. 5:16; 1 Cor. 6:19-20

(c) Matt. 7:17-18; Gal. 5:22-24; 2 Pet. 1:10-11
(d) Matt. 5:14-16; Rom. 14:17-19; 1 Pet. 2:12; 3:1-2

Question 93:

Can those be saved who do not turn to God from their ungrateful and impenitent ways?

Answer:

By no means. Scripture tells us that no unchaste person, no idolater, adulterer, thief, no covetous person, no drunkard, slanderer, robber, or the like is going to inherit the kingdom of God. (a)

(a) 1 Cor. 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:1-20; 1 John 3:14

Lesson 34 (Q. 94-97)

Question 94:

What is involved in genuine repentance or conversion?

Answer:

Two things: the dying-away of the old self, and the coming-to-life of the new. (a)

(a) Rom. 6:1-11; 2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:5-10

Question 95:

What is the dying-away of the old self?

Answer:

It is to be genuinely sorry for sin, to hate it more and more, and to run away from it. (a)

(a) Ps. 51:3-4, 17; Joel 2:12-13; Rom. 8:12-13; 2 Cor. 7:10

Question 96:

What is the coming-to-life of the new self?

Answer:

It is wholehearted joy in God through Christ(a) and a delight to do every kind of good as God wants us to. (b)

(a) Ps. 51:8, 12; Isa.57:15; Rom. 5:1; 14:17

(b) Rom. 6:10-11; Gal. 2:20

Question 97:

What do we do that is good?

Answer:

Only that which arises out of true faith, (a) conforms to God's law,(b) and is done for his glory;(c) and not that which is based on what we think is right or on established human tradition.(d)

(a) John 15:5; Heb. 11:6

(b) Lev. 18:4; 1 Sam. 15:22; Eph. 2:10

(c) 1 Cor. 10:31

(d) Deut. 12:32; Isa. 29:13; Ezek. 20:18-19; Matt. 15:7-9

Lesson 35 (Q. 98-105)

Question 98:

What is the Law of God?

Answer:

The Decalogue, or Ten Commandments. (a)

(a) Exod. 20. Deut. 5

Question 99:

How are these commandments divided?

Answer:

Into two tables. The first has four commandments, teaching us what our relation to God should be. The second has six commandments, teaching us what we owe our neighbor. (a)

(a) Matt. 22:37-39

Question 100:

What is the Preface to the ten Commandments?

Answer:

I am JEHOVAH, the Lord your God, who brought you out of the Land of Egypt, out of the House of Bondage.

Question 101:

What do we learn from the Preface?

Answer:

Three things: first he shows to whom the right of all Rule belongs, that is, to God himself for he says, “I am JEHOVAH”. Secondly, he says he is the God of his people, that through the promise of his bountifulness he might encourage them to obey him. Thirdly, he says, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, as if he should say, I am the one who made myself known to you and bestowed all those Blessings upon you; therefore you art bound to show thankfulness and obedience unto me. (a)

(a) Exod. 20:2

Question 102:

Do these things belong to us?

Answer:

Yes, because they figuratively include and imply all the deliverances of the Church; and further, also this was a type of our wonderful Deliverance achieved by Christ.

Question 103:

What is the first Commandment?

Answer:

Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.

Question 104:

What does the Lord require in the first commandment?

Answer:

That I, not wanting to endanger my very salvation, avoid and shun all idolatry,(a) magic, superstitious rites,(b) and prayer to saints or to other creatures.(c) That I sincerely acknowledge the only true God,(d) trust him alone,(e) look to him for every good thing(f) humbly(g) and patiently,(h) love him,(i) fear him,(j) and honor him (k) with all my heart. In short, that I give up anything rather than go against his will in any way. (l)

- (a) 1 Cor. 6:9-10; 10:5-14; 1 John 5:21
- (b) Lev. 19:31; Deut. 18:9-12
- (c) Matt. 4:10; Rev. 19:10; 22:8-9
- (d) John 17:3
- (e) Jer. 17:5, 7
- (f) Ps. 104:27-28; James 1:17
- (g) 1 Pet. 5:5-6
- (h) Col. 1:11; Heb. 10:36
- (i) Matt. 22:37 (Deut. 6:5)
- (j) Prov. 9:10; 1 Pet. 1:17
- (k) Matt. 4:10 (Deut. 6:13)
- (l) Matt. 5:29-30; 10:37-39

Question 105:

What is idolatry?

Answer:

Idolatry is having or inventing something in which one trusts in place of or alongside of the only true God, who has revealed himself in his Word.(a)

(a) 1 Chron. 16:26; Gal. 4:8-9; Eph. 5:5; Phil. 3:19

Lesson 36 (Q. 106-109)

Question 106:

What is the Second Commandment?

Answer:

Thou shalt make to thee no graven Image, nor the likeness of anything which is in Heaven above, or in the earth beneath, nor in the Waters under the Earth: thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them, for I the Lord thy God and a jealous God, and visit the sins of the Fathers upon the Children, unto the third and fourth Generation of them that hate me, and shew Mercy to thousands of them which love me, and keep my Commandments.

Question 107:

What is God's will for us in the second commandment?

Answer:

That we in no way make any image of God (a) nor worship him in any other way than he has commanded in his Word. (b)

(a) Deut. 4:15-19; Isa. 40:18-25; Acts 17:29; Rom. 1:22-23
(b) Lev. 10:1-7; 1 Sam. 15:22-23; John 4:23-24

Question 108:

May we then not make any image at all?

Answer:

God neither ought and may not be visibly portrayed in any way. Although creatures may be portrayed, yet God forbids making or having such images if one's intention is to worship them or to serve God through them. (a)

(a) Ex. 34:13-14, 17; 2 Kings 18:4-5

Question 109:

But may not images be permitted in the churches as teaching aids for the unlearned?

Answer:

No, we shouldn't try to be wiser than God. He wants his people instructed by the living preaching of his Word—(a) not by idols that cannot even talk.2. (a)

(a) Rom. 10:14-15, 17; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:195

(b) Jer. 10:8; Hab. 2:18-20

Lesson 37 (Q. 110-112)

Question 110:

What is the third Commandment?

Answer:

Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord they God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his Name in vain.

Question 111:

What is God's will for us in the third commandment?

Answer:

That we neither blaspheme nor misuse the name of God by cursing, (a) perjury, (b) or unnecessary oaths, (c) nor share in such horrible sins by being silent bystanders. (d) In a word, it requires that we use the holy name of God only with reverence

and awe, (e) so that we may properly confess him, (f) pray to him,(g) and praise him in everything we do and say. (h)

(a) Lev. 24:10-17
(b) Lev. 19:12
(c) Matt. 5:37; James 5:12
(d) Lev. 5:1; Prov. 29:24
(e) Ps. 99:1-5; Jer. 4:2
(f) Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:9-10
(g) Ps. 50:14-15; 1 Tim. 2:8
(h) Col. 3:17

Question 112:

Is blasphemy of God's name by swearing and cursing really such serious sin that God is angry also with those who do not do all they can to help prevent it and forbid it?

Answer:

Yes, indeed. (a) No sin is greater, no sin makes God more angry than blaspheming his name. That is why he commanded the death penalty for it. (b)

(a) Lev. 5:1
(b) Lev. 24:10-17

Lesson 38 (Q. 113-114)

Question 113:

But may we swear an oath in God's name if we do it reverently?

Answer:

Yes, when the government demands it, or when necessity requires it, in order to maintain and promote truth and trustworthiness for God's glory and our neighbor's good. Such oaths are approved in God's Word (a) and were rightly used by Old and New Testament believers. (b)

(a) Deut. 6:13; 10:20; Jer. 4:1-2; Heb. 6:16
(b) Gen. 21:24; Josh. 9:15; 1 Kings 1:29-30; Rom. 1:9; 2 Cor. 1:23

Question 114:

May we swear by saints or other creatures?

Answer:

No. A legitimate oath means calling upon God as the one who knows my heart to witness to my truthfulness and to punish me if I swear falsely. (a) No creature is worthy of such honor. (b)

(a) Rom. 9:1; 2 Cor. 1:23
(b) Matt. 5:34-37; 23:16-22; James 5:12

Lesson 39 (Q. 115-116)

Question 115:

What is the fourth Commandment?

Answer:

Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath Day: six Days should thou labor, and do all that thou hast to do, but the seventh Day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God, in it thou should do no manner of Work, Thou, nor thy Son, nor thy Daughter, thy Man-Servant, nor thy Maid-Servant, nor they Cattle, nor the Stranger that is within thy Gates: for in six Days the Lord made Heaven, and Earth, the Sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day, and hallowed it.

Question 116:

What is God's will for you in the fourth commandment?

Answer:

First, that the gospel ministry and education for it be maintained,(a) and that, especially on the festive day of rest, I regularly attend the assembly of God's people (b) to learn what God's Word teaches, (c) to participate in the sacraments,(d) to pray to God publicly,(e) and to bring Christian offerings for the poor.(f) Second, that every day of my life I rest from my evil ways, let the Lord work in me through his Spirit, and so begin already in this life the eternal Sabbath.(g)

(a) Deut. 6:4-9, 20-25; 1 Cor. 9:13-14; 2 Tim. 2:2; 3:13-17; Tit. 1:5

(b) Deut. 12:5-12; Ps. 40:9-10; 68:26; Acts 2:42-47; Heb. 10:23-25
(c) Rom. 10:14-17; 1 Cor. 14:31-32; 1 Tim. 4:13
(d) 1 Cor. 11:23-25
(e) Col. 3:16; 1 Tim. 2:1
(f) Ps. 50:14; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 8 & 9
(g) Isa. 66:23; Heb. 4:9-11

Lesson 40 (Q. 117-118)

Question 117:

What is the fifth Commandment?

Answer:

Honor thy Father and Mother that thy days may be long in the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

Question 118:

What is God's will for you in the fifth commandment?

Answer:

That I honor, love, and be loyal to my father and mother and all those in authority over me; that I obey and submit to them, as is proper, when they correct and punish me; (a) and also that I be patient with their failings—(b) for through them God chooses to rule us. (c)

(a) Ex. 21:17; Prov. 1:8; 4:1; Rom. 13:1-2; Eph. 5:21-22; 6:1-9; Col. 3:18-4:1
(b) Prov. 20:20; 23:22; 1 Pet. 2:18

(c) Matt. 22:21; Rom. 13:1-8; Eph. 6:1-9; Col. 3:18-21

Lesson 41 (Q. 119-122)

Question 119:

What is the sixth Commandment?

Answer:

Thou shalt do no Murder.

Question 120:

What is God's will for you in the sixth commandment?

Answer:

I am not to belittle, insult, hate, or kill my neighbor--not by my thoughts, my words, my look or gesture, and certainly not by actual deeds-- and I am not to be party to this in others; (a) rather, I am to put away all desire for revenge. (b) I am not to harm or recklessly endanger myself either. (c) Prevention of murder is also why government is armed with the sword. (d)

(a) Gen. 9:6; Lev. 19:17-18; Matt. 5:21-22; 26:52
(b) Prov. 25:21-22; Matt. 18:35; Rom. 12:19; Eph. 4:26
(c) Matt. 4:7; 26:52; Rom. 13:11-14
(d) Gen. 9:6; Ex. 21:14; Rom. 13:4

Question 121:

Does this commandment refer only to killing?

Answer:

By forbidding murder God teaches us that he hates the root of murder: envy, hatred, anger, vindictiveness. (a) In God's sight all such are murder. (b)

(a) Prov. 14:30; Rom. 1:29; 12:19; Gal. 5:19-21; 1 John 2:9-11
(b) 1 John 3:15

Question 122:

Is it enough then that we do not kill our neighbor in any such way?

Answer:

No. By condemning envy, hatred, and anger God tells us to love our neighbors as ourselves, (a) to be patient, peace-loving, gentle, merciful, and friendly to them, (b) to protect them from harm as much as we can, and to do good even to our enemies.(c)

(a) Matt. 7:12; 22:39; Rom. 12:10
(b) Matt. 5:3-12; Luke 6:36; Rom. 12:10, 18; Gal. 6:1-2; Eph. 4:2; Col. 3:12; 1 Pet. 3:8
(c) Ex. 23:4-5; Matt. 5:44-45; Rom. 12:20-21 (Prov. 25:21-22)

Lesson 42 (Q. 123-125)

Question 123:

What is the seventh Commandment?

Answer:

Thou shalt not commit Adultery.

Question 124:

What is God's will for us in the seventh commandment?

Answer:

God condemns all unchastity.(a) We should therefore thoroughly detest it (b) and, married or single, live decent and chaste lives. (c)

(a) Lev. 18:30; Eph. 5:3-5
(b) Jude 22-23
(c) 1 Cor. 7:1-9; 1 Thess. 4:3-8; Heb. 13:4

Question 125:

Does God, in this commandment, forbid only such scandalous sins as adultery?

Answer:

We are temples of the Holy Spirit, body and soul, and God wants both to be kept clean and holy. That is why he forbids everything which incites unchastity, (a) whether it be actions, looks, talk, thoughts, or desires. (b)

(a) 1 Cor. 15:33; Eph. 5:18
(b) Matt. 5:27-29; 1 Cor. 6:18-20; Eph. 5:3-4

Lesson 43 (Q. 126-128)

Question 126:

What is the eighth Commandment?

Answer:

Thou shalt not steal.

Question 127:

What does God forbid in the eighth commandment?

Answer:

He forbids not only outright theft and robbery, punishable by law.(a) But in God's sight theft also includes cheating and swindling our neighbor by schemes made to appear legitimate, (b) such as: inaccurate measurements of weight, size, or volume; fraudulent merchandising; counterfeit money; excessive interest; or any other means forbidden by God.(c) In addition he forbids all greed(d) and pointless squandering of his gifts.(e)

(a) Ex. 22:1; 1 Cor. 5:9-10; 6:9-10
(b) Mic. 6:9-11; Luke 3:14; James 5:1-6
(c) Deut. 25:13-16; Ps. 15:5; Prov. 11:1; 12:22; Ezek. 45:9-12; Luke 6:35
(d) Luke 12:15; Eph. 5:5
(e) Prov. 21:20; 23:20-21; Luke 16:10-13

Question 128:

What does God require of you in this commandment?

Answer:

That I do whatever I can for my neighbor's good, that I treat others as I would like them to treat me, and that I work faithfully so that I may share with those in need. (a)

(a) Isa. 58:5-10; Matt. 7:12; Gal. 6:9-10; Eph. 4:28

Lesson 44 (Q. 129-130)

Question 129:

What is the ninth Commandment?

Answer:

Thou shalt not bear false Witness against thy neighbor

Question 130:

What is God's will for you in the ninth commandment?

Answer:

God's will is that I never give false testimony against anyone, twist no one's words, not gossip or slander, nor join in condemning anyone without a hearing or without a just cause.(a) Rather, in court and everywhere else, I should avoid lying and deceit of every kind; these are devices the devil himself uses, and they would call down on me God's intense anger.(b) I should love the truth, speak it candidly, and openly acknowledge it.(c)

And I should do what I can to guard and advance my neighbor's good name.(d)

(a) Ps. 15; Prov. 19:5; Matt. 7:1; Luke 6:37; Rom. 1:28-32
(b) Lev. 19:11-12; Prov. 12:22; 13:5; John 8:44; Rev. 21:8
(c) 1 Cor. 13:6; Eph. 4:25
(d) 1 Pet. 3:8-9; 4:8

Lesson 45 (Q. 131-134)

Question 131:

What is the tenth Commandment

Answer:

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors house, nor his wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his. (a)

(a) Exodus 20.17.

Question 132:

What is God's will for you in the tenth commandment?

Answer:

That not even the slightest thought or desire contrary to any one of God's commandments should ever arise in my heart. Rather, with all my heart I should always hate sin and take pleasure in whatever is right. (a)

(a) Ps. 19:7-14; 139:23-24; Rom. 7:7-8

Question 133:

But can those converted to God obey these commandments perfectly?

Answer:

No. In this life even the holiest have only a small beginning of this obedience.(a) Nevertheless, with all seriousness of purpose, they do begin to live according to all, not only some, of God's commandments. (b)

(a) Eccles. 7:20; Rom. 7:14-15; 1 Cor. 13:9; 1 John 1:8-10
(b) Ps. 1:1-2; Rom. 7:22-25; Phil. 3:12-16

Question 134:

No one in this life can obey the Ten Commandments perfectly: why then does God want them preached so pointedly?

Answer:

First, so that the longer we live the more we may come to know our sinfulness and the more eagerly look to Christ for forgiveness of sins and righteousness. (a) Second, so that, while praying to God for the grace of the Holy Spirit, we may never stop striving to be renewed more and more after God's image, until after this life we reach our goal: perfection. (b)

(a) Ps. 32:5; Rom. 3:19-26; 7:7, 24-25; 1 John 1:9
(b) 1 Cor. 9:24; Phil. 3:12-14; 1 John 3:1-3

Of Prayer

(Lessons 46-53)

Lesson 46 (Q. 135-139)

Question 135:

Why do Christians need to pray?

Answer:

Because prayer is the most important part of the thankfulness God requires of us. (a) And also because God gives his grace and Holy Spirit only to those who pray continually and groan inwardly, asking God for these gifts and thanking him for them.(b)

(a) Ps. 50:14-15; 116:12-19; 1 Thess. 5:16-18
(b) Matt. 7:7-8; Luke 11:9-13

Question 136:

How does God want us to pray so that he will listen to us?

Answer:

First, we must pray from the heart to no other than the one true God, who has revealed himself in his Word, asking for everything he has commanded us to ask for.(a) Second, we must acknowledge our need and misery, hiding nothing, and humble ourselves in his majestic presence. (b) Third, we must rest on this unshakable foundation: even though we do not deserve it,

God will surely listen to our prayer because of Christ our Lord. That is what he promised us in his Word. (c)

(a) Ps. 145:18-20; John 4:22-24; Rom. 8:26-27; James 1:5; 1 John 5:14-15
(b) 2 Chron. 7:14; Ps. 2:11; 34:18; 62:8; Isa. 66:2; Rev. 4
(c) Dan. 9:17-19; Matt. 7:8; John 14:13-14; 16:23; Rom. 10:13; James 1:6

Question 137:

What did God command us to pray for?

Answer:

Everything we need, spiritually and physically, (a) as embraced in the prayer Christ our Lord himself taught us.

(a) James 1:17; Matt. 6:33

Question 138:

What is this prayer?

Answer:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our debts,

as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.
For yours is the kingdom
and the power
and the glory forever.
Amen. (a)

(a) Matt. 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4

Question 139:

Are Christians tied to this very Form of Prayer?

Answer:

We are not. Our Lord here delivers to his Church a brief Summary of those things which we are to ask of God, but yet Christ also expects us to ask for particular benefits. This form a set of general topics, under which all benefits may be grouped. All particulars of Prayer must agree & correspond with this general form, although we are not tied to this from. This is apparent from Jam. 1:5. where the Apostle exhorts the Saints, if any of them lack wisdom, they should ask of God, who gives liberally to all, but these words are not found in the form of prayer particularly expressed. In addition, we have examples of prayer both in the Old and New Testament, which do not exactly follow this form although all they asked was included in this prayer.

Lesson 47 (Q. 140-141)

Question 140:

Why did Christ command us to call God "our Father"?

Answer:

At the very beginning of our prayer Christ wants to kindle in us what is basic to our prayer--the childlike awe and trust that God through Christ has become our Father. Our fathers do not refuse us the things of this life; God our Father will even less refuse to give us what we ask in faith. (a)

(a) Matt. 7:9-11; Luke 11:11-13

Question 141:

Why the words "in heaven"?

Answer:

These words teach us not to think of God's heavenly majesty as something earthly, (a) and to expect everything for body and soul from his almighty power.(b)

(a) Jer. 23:23-24; Acts 17:24-25

(b) Matt. 6:25-34; Rom. 8:31-32

Lesson 48 (Q. 142)

Question 142:

What does the first request mean?

Answer:

"Hallowed be your name" means, Help us to really know you, (a) to bless, worship, and praise you for all your works and for all that shines forth from them: your almighty power, wisdom, kindness, justice, mercy, and truth.(b) And it means, Help us to direct all our living--what we think, say, and do--so that your name will never be blasphemed because of us but always honored and praised. (c)

(a) Jer. 9:23-24; 31:33-34; Matt. 16:17; John 17:3
(b) Ex. 34:5-8; Ps. 145; Jer. 32:16-20; Luke 1:46-55, 68-75; Rom. 11:33-36
(c) Ps. 115:1; Matt. 5:16

Lesson 49 (Q. 143)

Question 143:

What does the second request mean?

Answer:

"Your kingdom come" means, Rule us by your Word and Spirit in such a way that more and more we submit to you. (a) Keep your church strong, and add to it. (b) Destroy the devil's work; destroy every force which revolts against you and every conspiracy against your Word. (c) Do this until your kingdom is so complete and perfect that in it you are all in all. (d)

(a) Ps. 119:5, 105; 143:10; Matt. 6:33
(b) Ps. 122:6-9; Matt. 16:18; Acts 2:42-47
(c) Rom. 16:20; 1 John 3:8
(d) Rom. 8:22-23; 1 Cor. 15:28; Rev. 22:17, 20

Lesson 50 (Q. 144)

Question 144:

What does the third request mean?

Answer:

"Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" means, Help us and all people to reject our own wills and to obey your will without any back talk. Your will alone is good. (a) Help us one and all to carry out the work we are called to,(b) as willingly and faithfully as the angels in heaven. (c)

(a) Matt. 7:21; 16:24-26; Luke 22:42; Rom. 12:1-2; Tit. 2:11-12
(b) 1 Cor. 7:17-24; Eph. 6:5-9
(c) Ps. 103:20-21

Lesson 51 (Q. 145)

Question 145:

What does the fourth request mean?

Answer:

"Give us today our daily bread" means, Do take care of all our physical needs (a) so that we come to know that you are the only source of everything good, (b) and that neither our work and

worry nor your gifts can do us any good without your blessing. (c) And so help us to give up our trust in creatures and to put trust in you alone. (d)

(a) Ps. 104:27-30; 145:15-16; Matt. 6:25-34
(b) Acts 14:17; 17:25; James 1:17
(c) Deut. 8:3; Ps. 37:16; 127:1-2; 1 Cor. 15:58
(d) Ps. 55:22; 62; 146; Jer. 17:5-8; Heb. 13:5-6

Lesson 52 (Q. 146)

Question 146:

What does the fifth request mean?

Answer:

"Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" means, Because of Christ's blood, do not hold against us, poor sinners that we are, any of the sins we do or the evil that constantly clings to us. (a) Forgive us just as we are fully determined, as evidence of your grace in us, to forgive our neighbors. (b)

(a) Ps. 51:1-7; 143:2; Rom. 8:1; 1 John 2:1-2
(b) Matt. 6:14-15; 18:21-35

Lesson 53 (Q. 147-149)

Question 147:

What does the sixth request mean?

Answer:

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one" means, By ourselves we are too weak to hold our own even for a moment.(a) And our sworn enemies--the devil, (b) the world, (c) and our own flesh—(d) never stop attacking us. And so, Lord, uphold us and make us strong with the strength of your Holy Spirit, so that we may not go down to defeat in this spiritual struggle,(e) but may firmly resist our enemies until we finally win the complete victory. (f)

(a) Ps. 103:14-16; John 15:1-5
(b) 2 Cor. 11:14; Eph. 6:10-13; 1 Pet. 5:8
(c) John 15:18-21
(d) Rom. 7:23; Gal. 5:17
(e) Matt. 10:19-20; 26:41; Mark 13:33; Rom. 5:3-5
(f) 1 Cor. 10:13; 1 Thess. 3:13; 5:23

Question 148:

What does your conclusion to this prayer mean?

Answer:

"For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever" means, We have made all these requests of you because, as our all-powerful king, you not only want to, but are able to give us

all that is good; (a) and because your holy name, and not we ourselves, should receive all the praise, forever. (b)

(a) Rom. 10:11-13; 2 Pet. 2:9
(b) Ps. 115:1; John 14:13

Question 149:

What does that little word "Amen" express?

Answer:

"Amen" means, This is sure to be! It is even more sure that God listens to my prayer, than that I really desire what I pray for. (a)

(a) Isa. 65:24; 2 Cor. 1:20; 2 Tim. 2:13

To order additional copies please contact Doug Barger with the Reformed Baptist Faith and Family Ministry
dbarger@rbfaithandfamily.org
or
call: 317-542-3159

Orders of twelve or more qualify to be printed with a personal title page that features your church's name and contact information.

Visit our website for more resources which are dedicated to strengthen the teachings of our churches and homes.

www.rbfaithandfamily.*org*